Aquatic Plant Management Procedures

The County will use an ecosystem-based habitat improvement philosophy to manage invasive and problematic aquatic plants. Only those plants that adversely impact native aquatic plant communities, fisheries, and water quality, or have the potential to create flooding situations or impede navigation, will be considered.

Eligible Water Body Criteria

- Sovereign water bodies, or a site which might adversely impact sovereign water bodies, and must meet the following criteria:
 - The water body must have access to the boating public by way of an established, improved boat ramp or a direct navigable connection to an eligible sovereign water body, and
 - o There must be a sign at the boat ramp stating it is a public boat ramp or use area, and
 - o There must be at least one directional sign on the nearest paved roadway indicating the way to the public boat ramp, and
 - The boat ramp must have sufficient space to safely turn a vehicle and trailer around and ample parking space within one-quarter mile distance from the boat ramp, and
 - o There must be no intimidating or threatening conditions at the boat ramp (i.e., posted signs, pillars with chains, etc.).
- Sovereign water bodies with a surface area of ten acres or greater and do not meet one or more of the criteria listed in (1) above. Only water hyacinths, water lettuce, and hydrilla will be considered for management purposes on a case by case basis.
- Residential canals directly connected by navigable means to an eligible sovereign water body that has access to the boating public by way of an established, improved boat ramp. The water body must be included within that portion of the Ocklawaha, Palatlakaha, St. John's, and Wekiva river basins that fall within the jurisdiction of the County.
- Water bodies inaccessible to the boating public where there is a publicly owned park, swimming, or upland area. Aquatic plants will only be managed directly adjacent to those areas.
- Water bodies where the County has determined the aquatic plants are producing significant numbers of biting mosquitoes and other arthropods threatening public health and comfort.
- Water bodies requested by other governmental agencies for aquatic plant management activities provided these activities fall within the scope of this policy and are instrumental in the enhancement of the aquatic ecosystem.

Aquatic Plant Management Methods

- The most environmentally sound and cost effective methods will be utilized. All intended uses of the aquatic system will be considered when choosing a management strategy.
- Biological control agents (i.e., herbivorous fish, insects, plant pathogens, etc.) will be used in all appropriate sites. The County will cooperate with all responsible governmental agencies in the release and propagation of these organisms.
- Herbicides are the most widely used tool for aquatic plant management within the County.
 Only U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumers Services approved herbicides will be used in the County for the use site.

• Due to the high cost of mechanical/physical removal of aquatic vegetation, this method will only be used in conjunction with biological and herbicidal management efforts or where biological and herbicidal methods are inappropriate. In addition, this method will only be used if funding and equipment are available.

Aquatic Plant Species To Be Managed

Floating Plants

- o Water hyacinths (*Eichhornia crassipes*) will be managed on all eligible water bodies.
- Water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*) will be managed on all eligible water bodies.
- o Water fern (Salvinia minima) will be managed on residential canals only.
- O Duck weeds (*Spirodela polyrhiza*, *Lemna* sp.) will be managed on residential canals only.

• Submersed Plants

- o Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*) will be managed on all eligible water bodies.
- o Egeria (*Egeria densa*) will be managed on all eligible water bodies.
- o Hygro (*Hygrophila polysperma*) will be managed on all eligible water bodies.
- o Coontail (Ceratophyllum demersum) will be managed on residential canals only.
- o Cabomba (Cabomba caroliniana) will be managed on residential canals only.

Emerged Plants

- o Cattails (*Typha* sp.) will be managed on limited sites of all eligible water bodies as determined by the Aquatic Plant Management Director.
- o Torpedograss (*Panicum repens*) will be managed on limited sites of all eligible water bodies as determined by the Aquatic Plant Management Director.
- o Paragrass (*Urochloa mutica*) will be managed on limited sites of all eligible water bodies as determined by the Aquatic Plant Management Director.
- o Pennywort (*Hydrocotyle umbellata*) will be managed on residential canals only.
- o Alligator weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*) will be managed on limited sites of all eligible water bodies as determined by the Aquatic Plant Management Director.
- Any other aquatic plant species that may adversely impact native aquatic plant communities, fisheries, and water quality, or have the potential to create flooding situations or impede navigation, as determined by the Aquatic Plant Management Director.

Aquatic Plant Species Not Managed

- Algae and algae mats
- Watermeal (Wolffia sp.)
- Water fern (*Azolla caroliniana*)
- Any other aquatic plant species that causes aesthetic problems, affects an individual property
 owner as opposed to the public as a whole, or does not adversely impact the aquatic
 ecosystem.

Reservation of Authority

The authority to issue or revise this Policy is reserved to the Lake County Board of County Commissioners.